STERLING
INVESTMENTS
RESPECTING
THE
HAPPINESS
OF
MANKIND,
AND
SEEKING
Great-Britain's
RENOWN
ESPECIALLY;
SHOULD
HAVE
A
MEMORIAL.

The following Advertisement, with the annexed Preamble to a late Act *of the* American Congreſs, *is copied from the Penſylvania Gazette of the 23d of February* 1780; *and as the phraſeology and tenor of it harmonize ſo exactly with* "Common Senſe, Rights of Man," *and every Production by* Thomas Paine, *as to leave no doubt of the Author, my aim in preſenting them here, is at once to gratify the Friends of that able Statesman, and to hold up to* the Britiſh Senate *a Preface which* Juſtice *and* Benevolence *ſeem mutually to grace. In ſhort, ſo much it exceeds any exordium to what* Britiſh Acts *I have seen ſince I dared to ſtudy Politics, that I am unable to deſcribe its Beauties. It is an Epitome, not only of the* Rights—*but of the Whole* DUTY *of* MAN! *Are You a Patriot? Do, ponder its Principle, and weigh its Object:* Ordo, et decus, Dei Gratia, et omne venuſtum, *are blended in it: for it ſeeks unlimited* National *Improvements, by opening Communications with all Societies of ingenious men, without diſtinction,* "that a humane and philoſophical Spirit may be cultivated, *and Youth excited to laudable* Emulation *in the purſuit of* WISDOM." *It corresponds, in ſhort, ſo happily with the Plan* Sir Thomas Greſham *formed, when he founded his* (exciſed!) *College, that I cannot help wiſhing our Parliament may give their firſt Order at their next Convention, to purſue the ſame object, to reſtore* Greſham-Seat, *and to form ſuch a literary and philoſophical* Univerſity *there**, *as this Act is made to eſtabliſh at* Philadelphia. Europe *and* America *may then co-operate and unite in mutual practicable Eſſays to annihilate Oppreſſions; exemplifying by turning their Swords into* Pruning-*hooks, they are all awake to their beſt interests, and will* now *cultivate only the Arts, the charming Arts of Peace,* "in the proſecution and advancement of every branch of *uſeful* knowledge, for the benefit of Mankind!"

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* Moſt earneſtly hoping this ſeaſonable Extract from Mr. *Paine's* Act will yield much ſatisfaction to all who will inſpect it with the attention it merits, I take the liberty to declare, that it appears to me to point out the beſt method *Love* can urge of putting an end, a final End to the awful calamities and woes always attendant on war; for it kindly ſuggeſts to all indiſcriminately, that the Eſſence of Society is reciprocal Benefit. Yes: Man was not created to tyrannize over his fellow *Man*; but for a far better Uſe—to reſemble his benign Maker, to repreſent Him whoſe ſupreme delight is Munificence and Mercy! At leaſt as the *Act* is ſo congenial, in my opinion, to the *Intentions* of Sir *Thomas Greſham*, whoſe exemplary unparallel'd zeal for the Inſtruction of Society I *will* revere—I *muſt* tell you, Reader, that in his *Exchange*, you can ſee only a very, very ſmall part of his *Public Spirit*; he erected THAT merely for your temporal ſervice; *wiſhing* every one who walks there, might reap never-ending *Pleaſures* in his *College*!

PHILADELPHIA,
IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY,
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1780.

The Bill intituled, "An Act for incorporating the American Philoſophical Society held at Philadelphia, for promoting uſeful knowledge," was read a ſecond time, and being debated by paragraphs, was ordered to be printed for conſideration.

(*Extract from the Minutes.*)
THOMAS PAINE,
Clerk of the General Aſſembly.

An ACT *for incorporating the American Philoſophical Society, held at Philadelphia for promoting uſeful knowledge.*

WHEREAS the cultivation of uſeful Knowledge, and the advancement of the liberal Arts and Sciences in any country, have the moſt direct tendency towards the improvement of agriculture, the enlargement of trade, the eaſe and comfort of life, THE ORNAMENT, OF SOCIETY AND THE EASE AND HAPPINESS OF MANKIND. And whereas this country of *North America*, which the goodneſs of Providence hath given us to inherit, from the vaſtneſs of its extent, the variety of its climate, the fertility of its ſoil, the yet unexplored treaſures of its bowels, the multitude of its rivers, lakes, bays, inlets, and other conveniences of navigation, offers to theſe United States one of the richeſt ſubjects of cultivation, ever preſented to any people upon earth, And whereas the experience of ages ſhews that *Improvements of a public nature* are beſt carried on by Societies of liberal and *ingenious* men, *uniting* their *labours, without regard to nation, ſect, or party, in one grand purſuit, alike intereſting to* ALL, whereby *mutual prejudices are worn off*, a *humane* and philoſophical Spirit is cheriſhed, and Youth are ſtimulated to a laudable diligence and emulation in *the purſuit of* WISDOM⊙: And whereas, UPON THESE PRINCIPLES, divers public-ſpirited gentlemen of Pennſylvania and other *American* States did heretofore *Unite Themſelves*, under certain regulations into one voluntary Society, by the name of "The *American* PHILOSOPHICAL *Society*, held at Philadelphia, *for promoting* uſeful *Knowledge*," and by their ſucceſsful labours and inveſtigations, to the great credit of America, have extended their reputation ſo far, that men of the firſt eminence in the republic of letters in the moſt civilized nations of Europe have done honour to their publications, and deſired to be enrolled among their Members: And whereas the ſaid Society, after having been long interrupted in their laudable purſuits by the calamities of war, and the diſtreſſes of our country, have found means to revive their deſign, in hopes of being able to proſecute the ſame with their former ſucceſs, and of being further encouraged therein by the public: for which purpoſe they have prayed us, "the Repreſentatives of the *Freemen* of the Commonwealth of Pennſylvania, that they may be created One Body Politic and Corporate for ever, with ſuch powers, privileges, and immunities as may be neceſſary for anſwering the valuable purpoſes which the ſaid Society had originally in view.

Wherefore, in order to encourage the ſaid Society in the proſecution and advancement of all uſeful branches of Knowledge, *for the benefit of their Country and Mankind*, Be it enacted, and it is hereby enacted by the Repreſentatives of the Freemen of the Commonwealth of Pennſylvania, in General Aſſembly met, and by the authority of the ſame, That the Members of the ſaid Philoſophical Society, heretofore *voluntarily* aſſociated for promoting uſeful knowledge, and ſuch other perſons as have been duly elected Members and Officers of the ſame, agreeably to the fundamental laws and regulations of the ſaid Society, comprized in twelve ſections, prefixed to their firſt Volume of Tranſactions, publiſhed in Philadelphia, and ſuch other laws, and regulations as ſhall hereafter be duly made and enacted by the Society, according to the tenor hereof, be and for ever hereafter ſhall be, One Body Corporate and Politic in Deed, by the name and ſtyle of "The American Philoſophical Society held at Philadelphia, for promoting uſeful knowledge."

And whereas—Nations *truly* civilized (however unhappily at variance on other accounts) will never wage war with the *Arts* and *Sciences*, and the *Common Intereſts* of Humanity; Be it further enacted by the authority aforeſaid, That it ſhall and may be lawful for the ſaid Society, by their proper officers, at all times, whether in *peace* or *war*, to correſpond with *learned ſocieties*, as well as individual *learned men*, of any nation or country; upon matters merely belonging to the buſineſs of the ſaid Societies, ſuch as the *mutual communication* of their diſcoveries and proceedings in philoſophy and ſcience; the procuring Books, Apparatus, Natural Curioſities, and ſuch other articles and intelligence as are uſually exchanged between learned bodies, for furthering their common purſuits: Provided always, That ſuch correſpondence of the ſaid Society be at all times open to the inſpection of the ſupreme Executive Council of this Commonwealth, &c.

✣ *The Happieſt Of Men, A Sincere Patriot—Always Inculcating National Exaltation* — — — IN°

⊙ "THE PURSUIT OF *WISDOM!*" (Eccluſ. XLV. 26.) Merciful, Admirable, Juſt Obſervation!—Riſe! Purſue, Engliſhmen, This Employ! Repeal Laws Abominably Burthenſome!—Enact Laws Liberal—[LIGHT—lovely]— In Every Reſpect!—*ENGLAND!* Call A Parliament Thus Animated Inſtantly! Now *Improve* Opportunity!—*Nunc* Eſtote *Sapientes!* — Γνωθι Καιρον.